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AUTHOR Santa Rita, Emilio
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ABSTRACT

The evaluative study described in this report focused on students' and staff's responses to the Probationary Workshop Program (PWP) for students on academic probation at Bronx Community College. After introductory material dealing with the objectives and limitations of the program evaluation, the report looks at the general characteristics of the parallel questionnaires that were developed for students and for faculty and student facilitators. Next, technical considerations related to sample selection, questionnaire construction, and the usefulness and reliability of the data are examined. The next two sections of the report summarize the findings of the questionnaire. The responses of 57 students are analyzed with respect to satisfaction with the program's structure and organization, ratings of the importance of program contents, and areas where students felt they received the most help. The responses of 21 instructors and 8 student facilitators are then analyzed with regard to recommended modifications of PWP components, staff satisfaction, attitude changes, helpfulness of program contents, differences between PWP and traditional instruction, need for support services, changes in students' study patterns and behavior. Finally, the study findings are discussed in terms of emergent trends, unexpected results, and paradigms for remedial programs. The questionnaires are appended. (AYC)

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Students on Academic Probation at Bronx Community College:

Student and Staff Reponses to the Probational Workshop Program

Report III

Emilio Santa Rita
Department of Student Development

BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE

February 11, 1980

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Report III - Students on Academic Probation at Bronx Community College: Student and Staff Responses to the Probationary Workshop Program.

From Fall 1978 to Spring 1979, instructional faculty, counseling staff, and student facilitators collaborated in a team approach to mandating a Probationary Workshop Program (PWP) course for students on academic probation. This report describes an evaluative study of students' and staff's responses to the PWP offered at Bronx Community College (BCC) in the Fall term, 1978. Samples of the responses to the open-ended items conveyed the flavor and feeling tone of the reactions to the PWP experience. One of the notable results of the study was the emergence of a paradigm that integrates the most useful elements identified by students' and staff's responses to the questionnaire.

The BCC paradigm incorporates elements found in successful treatment programs associated with improved academic performance and characterized as (a) structured rather than unstructured, (b) lengthy rather than brief, (c) counseling aimed at the dynamics of underachievement used in conjunction with an academic studies program, (d) having high levels of therapeutic conditions (empathy, warmth, genuineness), and (e) appropriate to the needs of students.

Moreover, the BCC paradigm recognizes (a) the need to develop specific, career activities tailored to the developmental needs of the student, (b) the extensive use of support services of the college, and (c) the need for an educational community focus that calls for involvement of members of the college for a total, comprehensive approach to all aspects of student life and development. These latter elements circumscribe the counseling function that was added as a component to PWP in the Spring term, 1979.

The BCC paradigm will undoubtedly undergo changes as the model adapts to changing student needs. The important thing was that the formal evaluations provided both feedback and forum for examining PWP at BCC in the Fall term, 1978. Overall, the trends and concerns included in the BCC paradigm that emerged from the student and staff evaluation of PWP were salutary, much-needed and long overdue.

Emilio Santa Rita
Department of Student Development
February 11, 1980

Introduction

In a letter that accompanied each questionnaire, we explained our hopes for the Probationary Workshop Program Questionnaire I (PWPQI): (1) First, that it would serve as a clearinghouse of information, needs, expectations; second, that by paying equal attention to the concerns of students and staff members, it would act to build informational bridges currently lacking among students, staff and administration. Moreover, we conceived of the two questionnaires, one addressed to probationary students, the other to staff members, as basic building blocks in the cooperative network we were in the process of constructing (Santa Rita, E. 1978 a).

As in most campuses a folklore exists about the merit or lack of merit of different remedial programs and intervention services. The folklore is frequently out of date and may never have been accurate. The PWPQI can provide current evidence about program aspects that are operating exceptionally well and also about those that are less effective. While PWPQI cannot provide a complete picture — since every aspect of the program cannot be encompassed in a questionnaire -- it can provide a substantial amount of information about theeffectiveness of various aspects of the program. PWPQI can be quite useful in pinpointing particularly successful aspects of operations. The reasons for these successes can then be examined and perhaps applied more widely. PWPQI assesses the remedial thrust of PWP in conjunction with a wide-ranging preventive retention program for students in academic difficulties (Santa Rita, E. 1979 a). The questionnaire does not supplant but rather complements the traditional academic criteria (of GPA, attrition rates, credits completed, etc) for evaluating program effectiveness (Santa Rita, E. 1979 b).

Programs and activities well suited to student groups in one semester may not be as appropriate a semester later. While perceptive faculty and staff members frequently sense such changes as they are occuring, the extent and ramifications of the change may not be known with enough confidence to take appropriate action. Information in response to the PWPQI, particularly if it is consistent over divergent groups of students and staff personnel and over a period of time, can give enough confirmation to hints of changing student needs to let the college take prompt action in trimming outmoded practices and instituting new ones. PWPQI covers the remedial workshops of 4 sessions in the Fall 1978 term; PWPQII will assess the remedial workshops of 7 sessions given in the Spring 1979 term (Santa Rita, E. 1978b ; 1979 c).

General Characteristics of PWPQI

The most important source of information was considered to be the current experience of students on academic probation. The questionnaire was designed primarily as a device to help students convey their views on how the program procedures and services might be improved. This purpose -- giving students a vehicle for expressing their views -- differs in a subtle but important way from the purpose also contemplated by the questionnaire: that of providing staff personnel an opportunity to likewise express their views on PWP. The constituency to be served by the questionnaire was primarily students and secondarily the staff members. Services to these two constituencies should not be incompatible, which accounts for the subtlety of the distinction but the emphasis was to be clearly on the students.

In serving as a vehicle through which probationary students and staff members can provide information useful in planning or revising PWP, the questionnaire emphasizes those issues of concern about which some action can be taken by the college. The items were intended to be specific enough that possible corrective actions for undesirable situations would be immediately apparent. At the same time, they have enough general importance to be more than trivial. The explicit attempt to direct the content of the questionnaire to issues about which action can be taken should ensure that some remedial action would be possible for most of the issues that appear to be serious.

PWPQI provides information about the collective views of groups of probationary students and staff members. Problems associated with the interpretation of individual responses are avoided; anonimity of response is made feasible and anonimity was built into the procedures for administering the questionnaire.

Each item provides useful information independently of other items. The responses to several items considered simultaneously can provide interpretations broader than those associated with an item individually. The use of scale constructed from a number of items, representing some abstract underlying concept, is neither necessary nor the primary purpose of the items.

PWPQI is exploratory in nature and purpose; the items, therefore, were intended to be no more than indicators of broad areas within which the students, faculty and student facilitators could describe their own observations and experiences in PWP. For this reason, the write-ins followed questions because the structure was intended to be open enough to let issues important to respondents emerge without undue prompting. The write-ins were guides to be used

simply as a source of questions to restart the process when the information flow slowed and as checks on general topics that were to be covered.

Thus, an opportunity was provided in the questionnaire for students and staff personnel to write in issues of importance to them that were not adequately covered in the questionnaire. The write-in provisions were not left for the end of the questionnaire, but were provided with each set of items dealing with a common area. If a respondent had additional comments in the same area as the set of items to which he/she has just responded, the respondent had a space where he/she could write them in immediately.

Technical Considerations

For this administration of PWPQI, where statistical representativeness of probationary students was less important than the inclusion of a variety of points of view, nonrandom selection of classes with assurance of variety was a permissible approach, although random selection was encouraged (Matell, M.S. and J. Jacoby, J. 1971). A reasonable representation of probationary students was assured through the inclusion of types that varied with respect to career or transfer program preferences, part-time or full-time class schedule, etc. The student facilitators were recruited from an Honors Society (Phi Theta Kappa) representing various curriculum programs offered at the college. The faculty volunteers were affiliated with different academic departments of the college.

The items in PWPQI were constructed in a logical or a priori manner, rather than through factor analysis or some other essentially empirical analysis. The concepts implied by the labels given each area were concepts that were judged to be implicit in the pool of items assembled by this writer. All items in PWPQI are straightforward and undisguised. Each question is intended to obtain no more no less information than what is implicit in its wording. All the items in PWPQI are regarded as having face validity (Rundquist, E. A. 1966).

There was no attempt to study the temporal stability of the responses. The assumption is that in a research setting there is little reason to doubt that respondents would give inconsistent answers to factual questions, and that with nonfactual items the shift in response may represent real change rather than error in reporting (Bendig, A. W. 1974).

In general then, the PWPQI is intended to be useful item by item. The reliability of the information is assured through the aggregation of the responses of students and staff personnel. The information conveyed by virtue of the relationships among items and through the joint consideration of several

items, whether they relate statistically or not, can be examined directly through attention to clusters or groups of items formed in any way that seems useful.

It may also be noted that in survey research where groups of people rather than single individuals are the units of analysis, the occasional inaccurate response tends to loom relatively small when data are reduced to frequencies, medians and the like. There is also obvious reason for greater confidence in data gathered in research settings, in contrast, for example, to a job application or college admissions situations.

The fundamental information in the students' and staff's responses to PWPQI is the set of response distributions -- that is, for each item, the proportion of students that gave each response. Absorbing this kind of information for all items can be extremely tedious. The items are therefore grouped in the reportinto related clusters, permitting each cluster to be examined as a whole. In this way, the information in the individual items is not lost in a generalized summary score, but yet the information in related items permits a broader interpretation.

When the responses of a group of students and staff members are aggregated, the results refer to these respondents' collective perceptions of the variety of situations they found in their PWP experience. Response will vary because experiences will differ from different respondents and also because different respondents will respond differently to similar situations. We, therefore,decided that the most informative way to examine the questionnaire results is to inspect the distribution of responses of each item. Summarizing the responses into a mean score would lose the important information in the spread of the individual responses across the entire range of options. Calculating the standard deviations of the response distribution to add its information to the mean, would often be misleading because many sets of item responses will be far from normally distributed (Komorita, S. S. & W. K. Graham 1975). Noting how evenly or unevenly the responses are distributed across the available options, where they pile up, and how dominant the modal response is relative to others conveys the information in the students' and staff's responses much more effectively than means and standard deviations. The most desirable response distributions were presumed to be those that were neither flat, with response uniformly distributed over the response range, nor concentrated in a single response category.

The items asked respondents to indicate their attitudes, experiences, and preferences. The responses called for ranged from 3 to 5 number of ordered categories. We are aware that the optimal number of response categories depends on a number of interacting considerations. Since the items of the present questionnaire were not intended to be combined into multiple-item scales, and since the basic information was to apply to the institution rather than to individual respondents, questions of scale reliability were not appropriate (Komorita, S. S. & W. K. Graham 1975).

Analysis of Results

In part I of our summary analysis of the results, we will concentrate on the findings of the questionnaire distributed to probationary students. Part II will summarize the findings of the parallel questionnaire distributed to the staff -- faculty and student facilitators. Whatever conclusions are suggested by the contrasts and similarities between the responses on the two questionnaires will then be drawn.

I. Student Responses

Students evaluated the PWP by responding to a questionnaire that was distributed soon after the last PWP session. In the first section, students were asked to indicate degree of satisfaction with the organizational and structural aspects of the program. Section II asked the students to rate the importance of program contents related to improving academic effectiveness. Section III asked the students to pinpoint the problem area where they received the most help. Fifty-seven students (N=141) responded to the questionnaire.

Program Structure and Organization

A group of 4 interrelated items describes the student's degree of satisfaction with how well PWP has been functioning including students' experiences in the workshops together with observations about organization, procedures, staffing and mode of meeting the needs of students on academic probation.

Students do recognize their academic deficiencies. They appreciate the opportunity offered through PWP to improve their basic capabilities. The majority of students (88%) were very satisfied with the "Study Skills" segment overwhelmingly endorsing this feature of the program. The students were also enthusiastic about "Instructor/Counselor conducting the sessions" (78%). Only two counselors were actually involved in conducting the sessions. Since only 11 facilitators were actively involved in PWP, students were not exposed sufficiently enough to form an impression or arrive at any consensus about the intervention of their peers. Students were unable to comment on this feature

of the program.

Write-in comments tended to applaud the whole program effort although students said the program was a little bit late. Nevertheless, students strongly recommended that the program be made mandatory. In this section of the questionnaire, the students' reactions to PWP as an external influence on their educational experience took precedence over students' attitudes about themselves and other person-focused views. Nevertheless, students chose to comment on positive changes in self-direction as a result of PWP: their study habits improved, they were more committed, more serious about college, etc.

Program Contents

Six items dealt with problems students often describe having with respect to out-of-class study and also classroom activities. These items are related to academic performance including test performance, general understanding of materials in classroom, responsiveness to instruction, etc. to fill out a picture of the student's sense of academic well-being or trouble.

Students rated all six items as important stressing as very important "exam-taking" (88%) and "efficient management of time" (78%).

Written comments stressed that PWP should be developed and expanded into a required course and should be given the beginning of the first year in college. Students were feeling somewhat overwhelmed by amount of work required and as a consequence were having difficulty identifying a starting point preparing for exams. Students also repeatedly mentioned time as a major problem. Even the full-time, unmarried students juggle on-campus and off-campus activities, and travel between the two, to make the most of time that is broken up into a jumble of odd-sized pieces. The married and employed students have even more difficulty.

Problem Areas

Five items deal with problems specifically related to students' academic difficulties, financial situations, career plans, personal issues asking students the problem area where they received the most help.

The vast majority of students (93%) saw the sessions as meeting academic needs only. In fact some students commented that they would be reluctant to utilize PWP to deal with personal problems. Very few indicated a willingness to seek help in questions involving personal problems at school or home.

This section elicited the most written comments from students. Many students do not think they have enough information to make decisions about courses or programs or jobs or "what they might be using their college experience for." An impression produced by these comments and others is that

students are often unsure of themselves and whether what they are doing is really productive. They want information that will let them evaluate their current activities and directions so that they can resolve their uncertainty. They think they have too many required courses outside their major field while others wanted more latitude in their choice of courses. A large number of students seemed to have been directed into a particular program on the basis of the availability of "open courses." For these students who are often uncertain about their goals, the initial directions of their programs seemed to have been determined by happenstance. And, when these students have not yet developed a large measure of independence, they sometimes find it difficult to change directions after getting started in college.

II. Staff Responses

Staff (faculty and student facilitators) perceptions of PWP were gathered in response to several items under the following headings: (1) Which components of PWP should be retained or modified? (2) What were the main sources of staff satisfaction derived from participating with PWP? (3) What attitude changes toward innovative approaches have occured as a result of staff's involvement with PWP? (4) What program contents were most helpful to probationary students? (5) What made the PWP sessions radically different from regular classroom instruction? (6) What support services were most needed by probationary students? (7) What changes have been observed in student study pattern and behavior as a result of PWP? Twenty-one faculty (N=34) and 8 student facilitators (N=11) responded to part II of PWPQI.

Components of PWP

A group of 4 interrelated items referred to staff's view on organizational features such as staffing, subject matter content, structure, etc. asking the staff for proposed changes and recommendations to improve PWP.

The program components endorsed by faculty as features to be retained related to "emphasis on Study Skills" (56%), "informal interaction between faculty/counselor and students in small group sessions" (61%), "involvement of student facilitators" (58%) and "referral to support services of the college" (77%). Student facilitators ranked "informal interaction between faculty/counselor and students in small group sessions " (88%) as the most desirable feature of PWP.

Faculty suggested that PWP sessions should be given to probationary students assigned to advisory groups by subject area or curriculum preferences. Instructors by subject area or by curriculum assignment are most effective in helping students with classroom difficulties or in providing guidance linking

curriculum programs to career goals. More faculty members should be involved in early identification and reaching out to probationary students. PWP should begin early like the 4th or 5th week into the semester. Students' attendance at PWP sessions must be obligatory; some form of an "academic contract" must bind students to specific behavior objectives as measures of commitment to change in study patterns and achievement orientation.

Student facilitators wanted their role to be clarified. The role-stress related to the rather ambiguous and not so well-defined "monitoring role." Student facilitators saw themselves as "resource linkers," persons who know where to obtain resources pertinent to student needs.

Sources of Satisfaction

Five items formed a cluster that should indicate to staff a sense of being challenged by a modality different from traditional classroom procedures.

Faculty chose "chance to participate in a remedial outreach program" (66%) and "informal out-of-class contact with students" (78%) as the two main sources of satisfaction. Student facilitators selected "stimulation from students" (74%) and "chance to participate in a remedial outreach program" (78%) as the bases of satisfaction.

Faculty staff thought that contact with students would help instructors structure teaching to be more in line with student's developmental level and then to "stretch them into higher order thinking and problem-solving." The faculty would emphasize a shift in focus from content to "process." This would mean "surfacing issues related to underlying problems involving values, attitudes, cultural elements, etc."

Student facilitators emphasized the informal network of trained peer counselors. This will allow for greater outreach and be less threatening to probationary students.

Attitude Change and Expectations

Staff members were asked to report observed attitude changes toward innovative approaches in helping probationary students. These include variations in instructional approaches (supplanting traditional methods whenever possible), bridging the gap between academic work and real-life work situations, individualized programs designed to allow students to begin at his own level and to move at his own pace, heavy emphasis on cooperative network among instructors, etc.

The mean attributed self-change scores of faculty and student facilitators for each innovative criterion were computed for comparison before and after involvement with PWP. Some directionality was expected in favor of positive change. Therefore, a one-tailed test of significance was considered appropriate and .05 level was chosen to determine signficant difference. The t-tests for

for differences was not computed when it was discovered that pre-and post-mean scores of faculty and student facilitators on every innovative criterion were mirror reflections of each other. In retrospect, we overlooked one significant factor: this volunteer, self-selected group of eager participants were already committed in concept and in practice to structuring a new learning environment for students!

Faculty staff stressed that an innovative approach should cut across traditional departments or units. The cross-teaming notion would not only have the potential to increase diversity of viewpoints but to increase collegial contact: "a chance to share and participate in dialogue," "to give and take on an equitable basis," "coordinate classroom activities with colleagues in different subject areas."

Student facilitators emphasized career planning for probationary students. Many probationary students lack clarity of personal direction or commitment. They want to attend college for some vague reason, but, when questioned, they have little or no real purpose or enthusiasm for college. Experiences should be designed to assist students in realistic self-appraisal of interests and aptitudes.

Program Contents

The study skill segment presented in PWP was intended to prevent students from avoiding studying by developing skills that could enhance academic performance. This segment included techniques of study organization and the SQ3R study method.

The faculty staff chose "exam-taking" (87%) and "study habits/methods" (72%) as most helpful to probationary students. Student facilitators singled out "exam-taking" (87%) as most helpful to probationary student they had come in contact with.

The faculty thought that students should learn how to integrate classroom and reading assignments by dividing the material to be learned into sub-goals(e.g. chapters, topics, pages, problems). Students will then be able to assign priorities and maximize their study time by allocating all of the time they had not previously committed to content specific study periods. With regard to exam-taking, faculty suggested that students should approach instructors because "instructors are the very sources of final examination questions." Students should ask the instructors about "amount of material that needed to be learned" and "percentage of total grade represented by each part of each final examination."

Student facilitators would focus attention on the importance of reading and following test directions and supplying appropriate responses to specific kinds of exam questions. Student facilitators learned from their own experience how to convert chapter headings into practice test questions.

Innovative Aspects

Seven items referred to a variety of approaches in PWP that made the experience different from traditional classroom instruction.

The faculty staff thought the following elements as unique in their experience with PWP: "students felt that I am personally concerned about their problems" (72%) and "there was closer interaction in the small group" (64%). Student facilitators chose "there was closer interaction in the small group" (89%) as the most unique feature of their experience in PWP.

An important concern to student facilitators which often receives more lip service than practical attention involves the need for taking individual differences into account when working with students.

The faculty staff singled out two student groups -- older and students whose academic skills are deficient. These students have reasons for being in college that differ in a variety of ways from those of other students. Students in either of these groups often differ from other students in their immediate objectives, in the specificity of their goals, in their readiness to defer decisions while exploring various alternatives, in the kinds of programs they find suitable, and in other ways that go beyond simple differences in curricular preferences. One major weakness recognized by faculty is failure to accommodate to these students:" older students who after being away from it all for several years. . . while conscientious, their study patterns may not be efficient."

Support Services

Seven items refer to support services that students need for effective study and achievement in college such as counseling, financial aid, career-planning, tutoring, etc.

The majority of faculty (87%) and student facilitiators (89%) singled out "tutoring" as the support service students needed most in negotiating through the difficult period of academic probation.

Intervention at the personal level by means of counseling may be an effective method of alleviating academic problems. The faculty staff thought that it is essential, however, to increase academic performance at the same time. To overcome the many years of past failure, the student must be given encourage-

ment, a supportive relationship and the benefits of one-to-one tutoring.

Student facilitators would move into an intense posture: probationary students' attendance at tutoring sessions should be mandated, monitored and checked out by means of attendance cards!

Observed Changes

Faculty and student facilitators were asked to rate observed changes in students wih regard to academic survival skills, knowledge of self and career planning.

Both faculty and student facilitators were reluctant to comment on the items. The limited number of contacts (4) was felt as inadequate basis for assessing improvements in students who attended the PWP sessions.

For academic success, faculty thought that their primary goal was to get the student involved as much as possible in the process of education, to try to get student to "turn back on" to learning. The basic principle suggested was that "students do not learn as a result of what instructors do, but as a result of what instructors get them to do."

Student facilitators suggested working with students on simple task levels which would result in success for the student and consequently give the instructor ample opportunity to reinforce positively the successful learning behavior: "to praise," "compliment," "encourage" the student. Through such positive experiences, the students will be stimulated to become more involved and move rapidly into the learning process.

Focuses and Concerns

Our discussion under focuses and concerns is largely culled from the responses to Part I and Part II of PWPQI. Responses overlap as areas of concerns do. One characteristic of the responses is their variety; the diversity is striking. Obviously, we cannot cover all concerns in this summary report. Forpurposes of convenience, we will categorize them under three headings: (1) emergent trends, (2) surprises (at least they were surprises to us) and (3) patterns and paradigms.

Emergent Trends

Although no single problem or subject emerges as a dominant preoccupation, several themes appeared in the students' responses to PWPQI:

(1) There is a desire on the part of students to have an ongoing program for those in academic difficulties.

(2) Study Skills Segment (Study Organization and SQ3R) should be incorporated into a regular course offered as an integral part of an overall remedial/preventive program of the college.

(3) Academic problems remain the central focus of PWP. Students are comfortable with this academic and nonpersonal orientation.

(4) Students want help in self-direction, establishment of purposes, learning about available goals and making career decisions.

For the staff personnel, responses seem to center around the following main areas of concern:

(1) The PWP staff felt that better accommodation is needed to range of student abilities and educational goals.

(2) The compartmentalized approach to learning has not fully benefited students.

(3) There is a growing concern for an individualized approach in line with developmental level and needs of the student.

(4) There should be an "educational community focus" which includes the concept that all forces which have an influence on a student's life be included as a vital ingredient in the development of a positive learning atmosphere for students.

Surprises

We did not expect that faculty and student facilitator views could be organized in the same broad areas as student views with little or no difference in emphasis. Students' concerns, as expected, were more immediate. The process of their education was their primary concern in their daily encounters with learning problems in college. We expected staff members to be more interested about desired outcomes, long-range goals and expectations. As it turned out, the staff members expressed equal interest in the immediate concerns of students as well as in long-range goals and educational objectives. This view seemed to reflect a genuine and pervasive concern of the part of the staff members to provide educational experiences that students would want and value.

Academic problems remain the central focus of PWP for the students. Students were reluctant to use PWP for more personal concerns. Instructors, on the other hand, have been willing to risk role boundary change and expand their role to include strategies and approaches that have not been commonly viewed as a part of the realm of college teaching. But then again, students are known to dichotomize their role perceptions and expectations of services. They limit classroom matters to instructors: all other issues belong to the counselors. The late scheduling of PWP conflicted with prior commitments of counselors, limiting their participation. We can only speculate. Counselor presence could have given respondents a different vantage point and probably a very different direction to their responses.

Student facilitators identified with faculty on issues of concern to

students. They were, however, reluctant to assume a superordinate role in relating to students. They were not comfortable "monitoring" student study habits and behavior. Student facilitators saw themselves as "resource linkers" to support services that probationary students could use. They did not see themselves as "models" leading the way to successful college experience. Student facilitators would emphasize an informal atmosphere and a climate of trust where personal problems of social and family relationships, identity, etc. are explored in a peer-group setting.

Patterns and Paradigms

Conducting a study such as this provided us an increased opportunity to communicate with students and staff personnel. The implicit was made explicit, enabling us to view more closely elements of PWP that were perceived as helpful as well as look into suggestions and recommendations to improve PWP.

We have studied the staff's responses and views as well as students' responses and we have evaluated these sources against our own experiences in the field of student development. Discernible patterns did in fact appear and reappear in what students want and what the staff can do to help students. These patterns form a paradigm with the following features:

(1) An academic studies course is the main program content with more frequent resort to tutoring closely associated with career planning as collateral components.

(2) Academic studies course (techniques of study organization and SQ3R study method) should be offered as a regular course. This study skill segment should be mandated for students on academic probation, reinforced by an "academic contract" on study objectives and behavioral goals.

(3) Probationary students should be assigned to PWP by advisory groups, i.e. by curriculum preferences of students.

(4) There is a need to focus on individual needs and developmental level of student coupled with an extensive use of support services offered by the college.

(5) There is a growing recognition of the "educational community" emphasis, of combining teaming concepts and collaboration among members of the college community to forge a total approach to all aspects of the student's life and development.

These patterns, although indicative, fall far short from recapitulating a definitive, comprehensive model of intervention. What do other studies about outreach remedial programs say? To what extent do they corroborate the trends and patterns that emerged in response to PWPQI? Do they suggest convergent or divergent patterns from the paradigm suggested in response to PWPQI?

Twenty-three studies were reviewed (Bednar, R.L. & S.L. Weinberg 1970) that evaluated the various effectiveness of various treatment programs for underachieving college students. All of the studies used grade-point average as the dependent variable, and a specific treatment program intended to improve student academic performance as the independent variable. The results of the survey indicate that the treatment programs associated with improved academic performance were characterized as follows:

(1) An academic studies program alone is ineffective; however, when used as an adjunct to either group or individual counseling aimed at the underlying dynamics of underachievement, the treatment program tended to be associated with improved GPA.

(2) Treatment programs of longer duration tended to report a higher frequency of supportive findings, i.e. students who participated longer showed the greatest GPA improvement.

(3) "Structured " programs (directive or prescriptive) are associated with improved academic performance far more than "unstructured" programs (nondirective or affectively-oriented).

(4) Successful treatment programs are geared to needs of students. For example, the structured program is appropriate for dependent students and unstructured program for independent students.

(5) The higher the therapeutic conditions of empathy, warmth, genuineness for underachieving students, the more effective the treatment.

In other words, this survey of the characteristics of successful treatment programs for underachieving college students offered extensive support to the BCC paradigm. In addition, the BCC paradigm recognizes (1) the need to develop specific career activities tailored to meet the developmental needs of the student, (2) the extensive use of support services of the college and (3) the need for an educational community focus that calls for involvement of members of the college for a total, comprehensive approach to all aspects of student life and development. These three additional elements are reaching out to define and circumscribe a counseling function. Indeed, a counseling component was added to the PWP of the Spring term, 1979.

The BCC paradigm will undoubtedly undergo changes as the model adapts to changing student needs. The important thing was that the formal evaluations provided both feedback and a forum for examining PWP at BCC. Overall, the trends and concerns included in the BCC paradigm, that emerged from the student and staff evaluation of PWP, are salutary, much-needed and long overdue.

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Student Questionnaire

Dear Student: We are continually trying to modify and improve the Academic Retention Program at BCC so that we can help students on academic probation in a more effective manner. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey and respond to the items below. You do not have to identify yourself and your answers will be kept completely and strictly confidential.

A. Last month, you were told to see a counselor in Loew Hall, register for a Study Skills workshop, attend all the group sessions, etc. All these activities were part of a program -- the Academic Retention Program -- designed to help you avoid academic suspension and become a successful student at BCC. You are now asked to indicate how satisfied you were with regard to the following aspects of the program. Please use the following scale:

(1) Dissatisfied (2) Satisfied
(2) Very Satisfied (4) Don't Know

1. Study Skills workshops 1 _____
2. Instructor/Counselor conducting the sessions 2 _____
3. Student facilitators helping in the group sessions 3 _____

Please describe changes you think would make the Academic Retention Program a better program for the student on academic probation:_____

_____

_____

B. You were asked to register in Study Skills workshops for a total of four (4) sessions. Several topics were discussed in the group sessions. Rate the importance of the topics in helping you work your way out of academic probation. Please use the following scale:

(1) Useless (2) Unimportant (3) Important
(4) Very Important (5) Does not apply

4. Efficient use and management of time 4 _____
5. Exam-taking 5 _____
6. Note-taking 6 _____
7. Study concentration 7 _____
8. Study habits/methods 8 _____
9. Textbook reading 9 _____

Would you like to see other topics included in the workshops? Explain briefly:_____

_____

_____

C. In what problem areas did you feel the faculty/counselor leading your group has been MOST helpful? Choose only one.

(1) Academic (2) Career Planning (3) Family problems
(4) Personal adjustment (5) Social Adjustment 10 _____

Faculty/Student Facilitator Questionnaire

Dear Faculty/Student Facilitator: We are continually attempting to modify and improve the Academic Retention Program at BCC so that we can help probationary students in a more effective manner. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey and respond to the items below. You do not have to identify yourself and your answers will be kept completely and strictly confidential.

A. Considering the present status of the Academic Retention Program, indicate whether you feel the following characteristics should be increased, decreased, or left the same.

(1) Increased (2) Decreased (3) Left the same

1. The amount of emphasis on Study Skills 1 _____
2. The amount of informal interaction between faculty/counselor and students in small group sessions 2 _____
3. The extent to which student facilitators are involved in the program 3 _____
4. The amount of referrals made to other support services of the college 4 _____

Please comment briefly on changes/new elements you like to see incorporated in the Academic Retention Program: _____

_____

_____

Using the following scale, please indicate how satisfied you are with the aspects of your present role/position in the Academic Retention Program listed below:

(1) Very Dissatisfied (2) Dissatisfied (3) Neutral
(4) Satisfied (5) Very Satisfied (6) Don't Know

5. Stimulation from students 5 _____
6. Stimulation from colleagues 6 _____
7. Opportunity to teach a course outside my college assignment 7 _____
8. Chance to participate in a remedial outreach program 8 _____
9. Informal out-of-class contacts with students 9 _____

Please comment briefly on changes/new elements you like to see incorporated into the organizational structure of the Academic Retention Program: _____

_____

_____

C. You are asked to focus on some changes that may have occured with regard to your way of looking at certain stituations before and after your involvement with the Academic Retention Program. Please use the following scale:

(1) of no importance (2) of some importance
(3) of high importance (4) of extremely high importance

			before	after
10.	New approaches to individualized instruction, such as working with students in small groups	10	_____	_____
11	Developmental or remedial programs in basic skills such as reading, writing, mathematics	11	_____	_____
12.	Preventive/remedial tutoring	12	_____	_____
13	Importance of career planning	13	_____	_____
14.	Counselor-Faculty team approach	14	_____	_____
15.	Student-student helping relationship	15	_____	_____
16.	Closer faculty-student relationship	16	_____	_____
17.	Faculty-to-faculty interdepartmental cooperative networks	17	_____	_____
18	A sense of community among administrators, faculty and student	18	_____	_____

Please comment briefly on changes/new elements you like to see happening in the working relationships/interactions of the staff in the Academic Retention Program: _____

_____

_____

D. With regard to the topics covered in the Study Skills workshops, which subject matter do you think has been helpful to the probationary student? Please use the following scale:

(1) not helpful (2) somewhat helpful
(3) helpful (4) most helpful
(5) does not apply

19.	Efficient use and management of time	19	_____
20.	Exam-taking	20	_____
21.	Note-taking	21	_____
22.	Study concentration	22	_____
23.	Study habits/methods	23	_____
24.	Textbook reading	24	_____

Please write further comments on topics you want to see included in the Study Skills workshop: _____

_____

_____

Consider the statements below, and choose no more than <u>three</u> which best describe the features which made the group sessions different from the way regular courses are taught in college.

(1)	Subject matter was seen as essential to college survival.		
(2)	Study Skills are important in handling college work.		
(3)	Students felt that I am personally concerned about their problems.	25	_____
(4)	Students were challenged to succeed.		
(5)	There was closer interaction in the small group.	26	_____
(6)	There was much enthusiasm in the small group.		
(7)	Students were encouraged to assume responsibility for their life/career.	27	_____

Please write suggestions to make the sessions a more enriching experience for the probationary students in the group:_____

_____

_____

E. In the course of referring students to support services of the college, you may now have an idea which service(s) was/were needed by the student. Please use the following scale:

(1) not needed
(2) needed somewhat
(3) needed
(4) needed most

28. Career/Transfer	28	_____
29. Financial Aid	29	_____
30. Learning Center	30	_____
31. Legal Services	31	_____
32. Psychological Services	32	_____
33. Tutoring	33	_____
34. Other (specify)_____	34	_____

Please write further comments on service(s) you think is/are needed by the student during this crucial semester of academic probation:_____

_____

_____

F. In general, how well prepared do you feel are the probationary students on each of the following areas before and after the students' involvement in the Academic Retention Program? Please use the following scale:

(1) less than adequately
(2) adequately
(3) more than adequately
(4) don't know

		before	after
35. Ability to budget time wisely	35	_____	_____
36. Ability to work with others	36	_____	_____
37. Following directions	37	_____	_____
38. Listening and note-taking skills	38	_____	_____
39. Mathematical ability	39	_____	_____
40. Reading	40	_____	_____
41. Writing skills	41	_____	_____
42. Knowledge of self	42	_____	_____
43. Career planning	43	_____	_____

Please write further comments you may have related to the academic potential of students in your group:_____

_____

_____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

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